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TERRY DODSON RACHEL
DOWN AMONG THE DEAD MEN Part 4 of 4

# PREVIOUSLY IN SPIDER-MAN

## "DOWN AMONG THE DEAD MEN"

### PART ONE OF FOUR

When a vandal defiles his Uncle Ben's headstone in the middle of the night, Peter Parker is called to the cemetery to investigate.

While there, he receives a phone call on his cell phone from a mysterious stranger who claims to know Parker's secret identity as Spider-Man. Peter, of course, claims that the caller is mistaken, until the man insinuates that he's kidnapped Peter's Aunt May.

In a panic, Peter frantically swings through the city—sans costume—to May's apartment, only to find the place smashed and ransacked with Aunt May nowhere in sight.

### PART TWO OF FOUR

Peter Parker's worst nightmare is unfolding before his eyes. Someone from his past has discovered that he's Spider-Man and has attacked him using the people he loves most. His Aunt May has been kidnapped and an exhausted, desperate Spider-Man has been told by his criminal contacts that super-villains Electro and The Vulture are responsible...

### PART THREE OF FOUR

Spider-Man's life has been shattered. His Aunt May has been kidnapped by an unknown foe that discovered his secret identity and is using this knowledge to destroy him. Led on a wild-goose chase around New York City by The Owl, Spider-Man was hospitalized after fighting Electro and now finds himself in a hospital bed, his mask removed and his body battered and broken. He's never been more desperate which, of course, makes it the perfect moment for an enemy to strike....


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DOWN AMONG THE DEAD MEN
PART 4 OF 4
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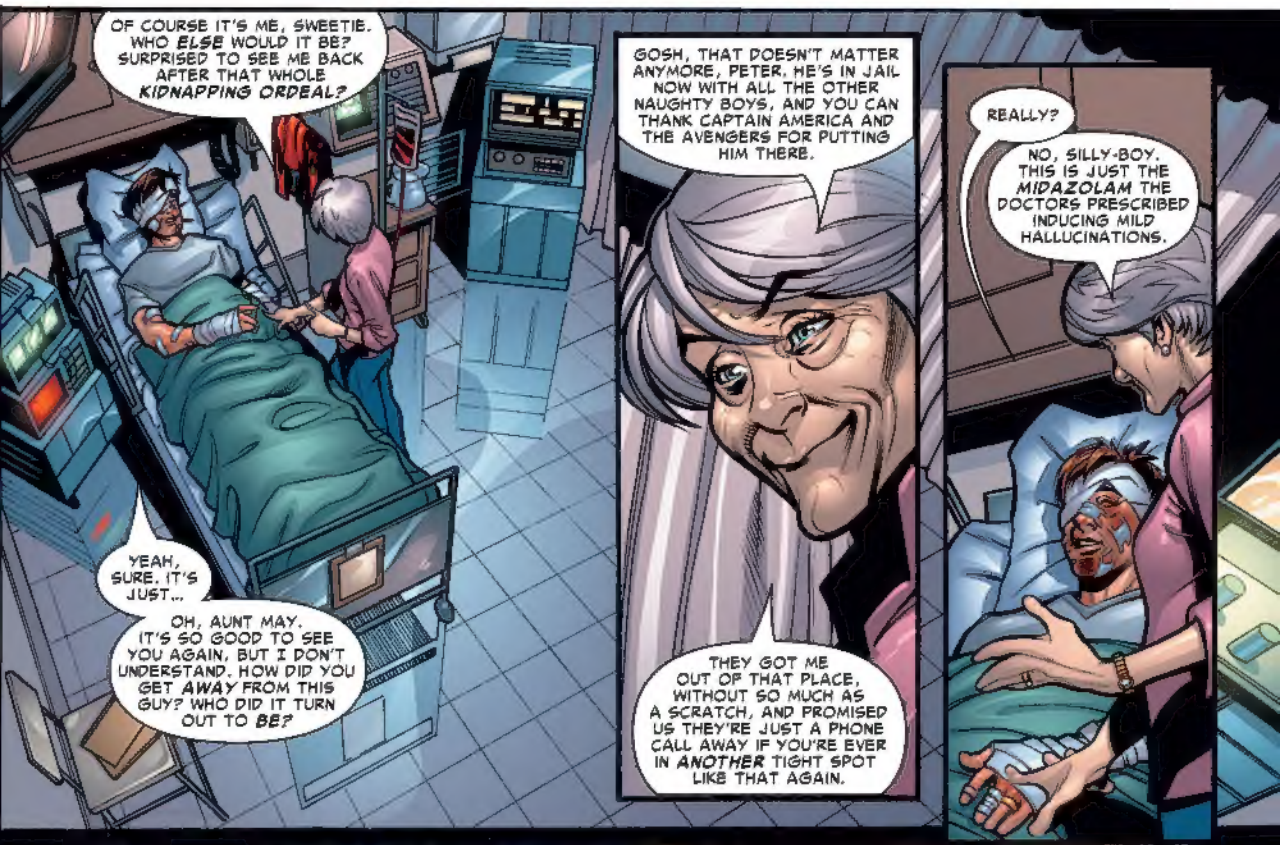
OH, PETER. YOU'RE LIKE A LITTLE BROKEN BIRD LYING THERE. I *TOLD* YOU THIS WOULD HAPPEN IF YOU DIDN'T STOP ALL THAT SPIDER-MAN SILLINESS.

...AUNT MAY?
IS THAT YOU?


OF COURSE IT'S ME, SWEETIE. WHO *ELSE* WOULD IT BE? SURPRISED TO SEE ME BACK AFTER THAT WHOLE *KIDNAPPING ORDEAL?*
YEAH, SURE. IT'S JUST...
OH, AUNT MAY. IT'S SO GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN, BUT I DON'T UNDERSTAND. HOW DID YOU GET *AWAY* FROM THIS GUY? WHO DID IT TURN OUT TO *BE?*
GOSH, THAT DOESN'T MATTER ANYMORE, PETER. HE'S IN JAIL NOW WITH ALL THE OTHER NAUGHTY BOYS, AND YOU CAN THANK CAPTAIN AMERICA AND THE AVENGERS FOR PUTTING HIM THERE.
THEY GOT ME OUT OF THAT PLACE, WITHOUT SO MUCH AS A SCRATCH, AND PROMISED US THEY'RE JUST A PHONE CALL AWAY IF YOU'RE EVER IN *ANOTHER* TIGHT SPOT LIKE THAT AGAIN.
REALLY?
NO, SILLY-BOY. THIS IS JUST THE *MIDAZOLAM* THE DOCTORS PRESCRIBED INDUCING MILD HALLUCINATIONS.

THE VULTURE'S WALKING TOWARDS YOUR BED EVEN AS WE SPEAK.
DIDN'T YOU HEAR THAT LITTLE GRUNT FROM THE NURSE AS HE TWISTED HER *HEAD* ALL THE WAY AROUND?

OKAY, SPIDER-MAN.
LET'S GET DOWN TO BUSINESS HERE...

NO STRUGGLING, BOY. IT'LL ALL BE OVER SOON. I'M NOT A SADISTIC MAN. THIS WON'T TAKE ANY LONGER THAN IT HAS TO.
ALL I WANT IS A PEEK BENEATH THOSE BANDAGES FIRST, TO SEE JUST WHO YOU WERE ALL THESE YEARS.
His gloves stink of nicotine and what smells like beef jerky. He's heavier than he looks, wriggling around and giggling through those awful yellow teeth, excited as he picks away.
The clock's too small. The cups are made of plastic. I need to reach something with a little more WEIGHT...
UNNGH!
Bull's-eye!
FREEZE OR WE BLOW YOU A NEW ONE, VULTURE!
GO AHEAD AND MAKE MY DAY, DIRTY HARRY...
Get your act together, Parker. Not feeling your feet is completely irrelevant. You've gotta get up and protect these...

BANG!
BANG!
AIGHGH!
HOLY JEEZ!
HOLD YOUR FIRE, YOU IDIOT!
OH, GOD. I DIDN'T MEAN TO SHOOT HIM. I WAS AIMING AT...
OH MY GOD.

HIT BY A CAR, DOPED UP ON PAIN-KILLERS, AND SHOT A COUPLE OF TIMES? YOU'RE NOT EXACTLY HAVING A GOOD DAY, SPIDER-MAN.
BUT THAT'S GOOD. BECAUSE I'M NOT HAVING A GOOD ONE EITHER AND IT'S ALL DOWN TO YOU, AND THAT TWENTY MILLION BUCKS OF OURS YOU SCATTERED ACROSS THE CITY.
YOU KNOW WHAT I WAS GONNA DO WITH MY SHARE OF THAT MONEY? YOU KNOW WHAT I WAS GONNA SPEND IT ON?
MY GRANDSON, SPIDER-MAN! THAT MONEY WAS GONNA PAY FOR MY GRANDSON'S LEUKEMIA TREATMENT, YOU LOUSY LITTLE SLEAZE!
AGH!
STUPID BIRDS NEARLY TOOK MY EYE OUT!
GOD!
DIDN'T KNOW I HAD A FAMILY, HUH? WELL, NEITHER DID I UNTIL MY DAUGHTER-IN-LAW SHOWED UP AT RIKER'S WITH THE MOST BEAUTIFUL BABY BOY YOU EVER SAW IN YOUR LIFE.
SHE SAID HER HUSBAND WAS DOING TIME FOR ARMED ROBBERY OVER IN DELAWARE, AND SHE WANTED HER BOY TO MEET ME BEFORE SOME SUPER-PUNK DROPPED A TRUCK ON ME OR SOMETHING.

"OF COURSE, I DIDN'T BELIEVE A WORD UNTIL SHE SHOWED ME THE PICTURES AND THE LETTERS AND THE COUPLE'A BIRTHDAY CARDS I'D SENT THE BOY'S MOTHER. THEN IT ALL CAME FLOODING BACK.

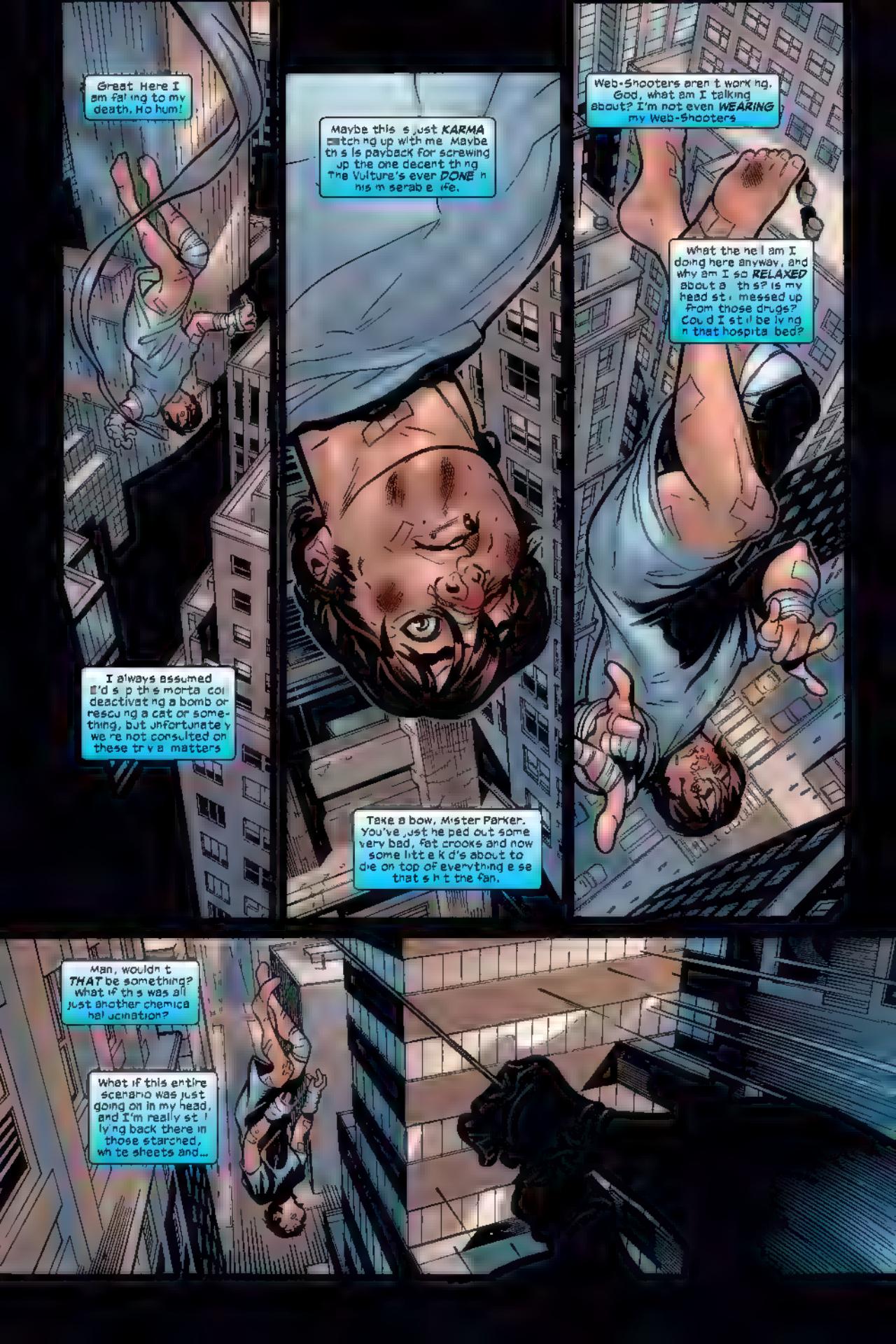
"I HAD A *FAMILY*, SPIDER-MAN. EVERY WEEK FOR SIX ENTIRE MONTHS THEY *VISITED* ME IN THAT DUMP AND, WHEN THEY LET ME OUT, I SAW THEM *TWICE* A WEEK.
"DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW MUCH HARDER THAT MADE IT? DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW *BAD* I TOOK IT WHEN THEY FOUND THAT LITTLE KID'S HORRIBLE DAMN *LUMP*?"

HALF A MILLION BUCKS: THAT'S WHAT THE DOCTORS SAID. HALF A MILLION BUCKS AND HE MIGHT HAVE A CHANCE.
TEN MILLION, ON THE OTHER HAND: THAT'D GET HIM THE BEST CANCER TREATMENT MONEY COULD BUY AND SET MY LITTLE PRINCE UP FOR THE REST OF HIS LIFE.

THAT'S WHY I WANTED THE *MONEY*, SPIDER-MAN!
TEN MILLION BUCKS IS CHICKEN-FEED TO GUYS LIKE KINGPIN AND THE OWL, BUT IT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LIVING AND DYING FOR MY LITTLE *GRANDSON*!
WHAT?

AH, GET THOSE STUPID *BANDAGES* OFF AND YOU'LL HEAR ME!

MY GOD.
DID YOU JUST...?
OH MY GOD...
I DON'T BELIEVE THIS. ALL THOSE FRIENDS OF MINE YOU PUT AWAY...I JUST ASSUMED YOU'D HAVE TO BE SOMEBODY, BUT LOOK AT YOU! YOU'RE A NOBODY!
YOU COULD BE PUMPING GAS OR STACKING SHELVES WHEN YOU'RE NOT DOING THIS!
JEEZ, THIS IS DEPRESSING...
ALL THOSE YEARS OF GETTING BEATEN BY A NOBODY.


Great. Here I am falling to my death. Ho hum!
I always assumed I'd stop this mortal coil deactivating a bomb or rescuing a cat or something, but unfortunately we're not consulted on these trivial matters
Maybe this is just KARMA catching up with me. Maybe this is payback for screwing up the one decent thing The Vulture's ever DONE in his miserable life.
Take a bow, Mister Parker. You've just helped out some very bad, fat crooks and now some little kid's about to die on top of everything else that's hit the fan.
Web-Shooters aren't working. God, what am I talking about? I'm not even WEARING my Web-Shooters
What the hell am I doing here anyway, and why am I so RELAXED about all this? Is my head still messed up from those drugs? Could I still be lying in that hospital bed?
Man, wouldn't THAT be something? What if this was all just another chemical hallucination?
What if this entire scenario was just going on in my head, and I'm really still lying back there in those starched, white sheets and...

UUNNH!!
What the HELL?
Felicia?
LUCKY FOR YOU THE GOOD GUY'S GOT A TV TOO, PARKER.
What the he 's GOING ON here?

NO, NO, NO, NO--
NO!
Go mp Feathers and fur everywhere A c ock ticks, a copyboy scratches h s nose, a edge as big as the world st cks ts neck out and ..
GOT IT!
Stay stra ght, Parker Focus on the brickwork Just mag ne how much it s going to HURT if your head watermelons aga nst that s dewa k down there.
SCHROETERS
Stay straight and everything's going to be FINE...
BLACK CAT? BLACK CAT? YOU'LL BE A BLACK MARK ON THE SIDE OF THAT BUILDING BY THE TIME I'M DONE, YOU STUPID SKANK!

MY GOD.
WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU PEOPLE? THIS GUY TOUCHES YOU HE'LL KILL YOU...
GET THE HELL UNDER THOSE TABLES!
WORRY ABOUT YOURSELF, HONEY!

YOU'RE JOKING, RIGHT?
YOU'RE NOT EXACTLY DOCTOR DOOM!
HUTT!
GAAAHH!
UUSHH!

YOU MORON! THIS SUIT JPS MY STRENGTH BY FIVE HUNDRED PERCENT! I COULD PUNCH A HOLE IN YOU WHILE I'M WEARING THIS.
THAT'S WHY I'M TAKING IT APART, TOOMES
WITHOUT THE SUIT YOU'RE JUST ANOTHER OLD MAN IN HIS FIVE-DAY-OLD UNDERWEAR!
LET'S SEE HOW GOOD YOU FLY WITHOUT A NAVIGATION SYSTEM!
UUNGH!

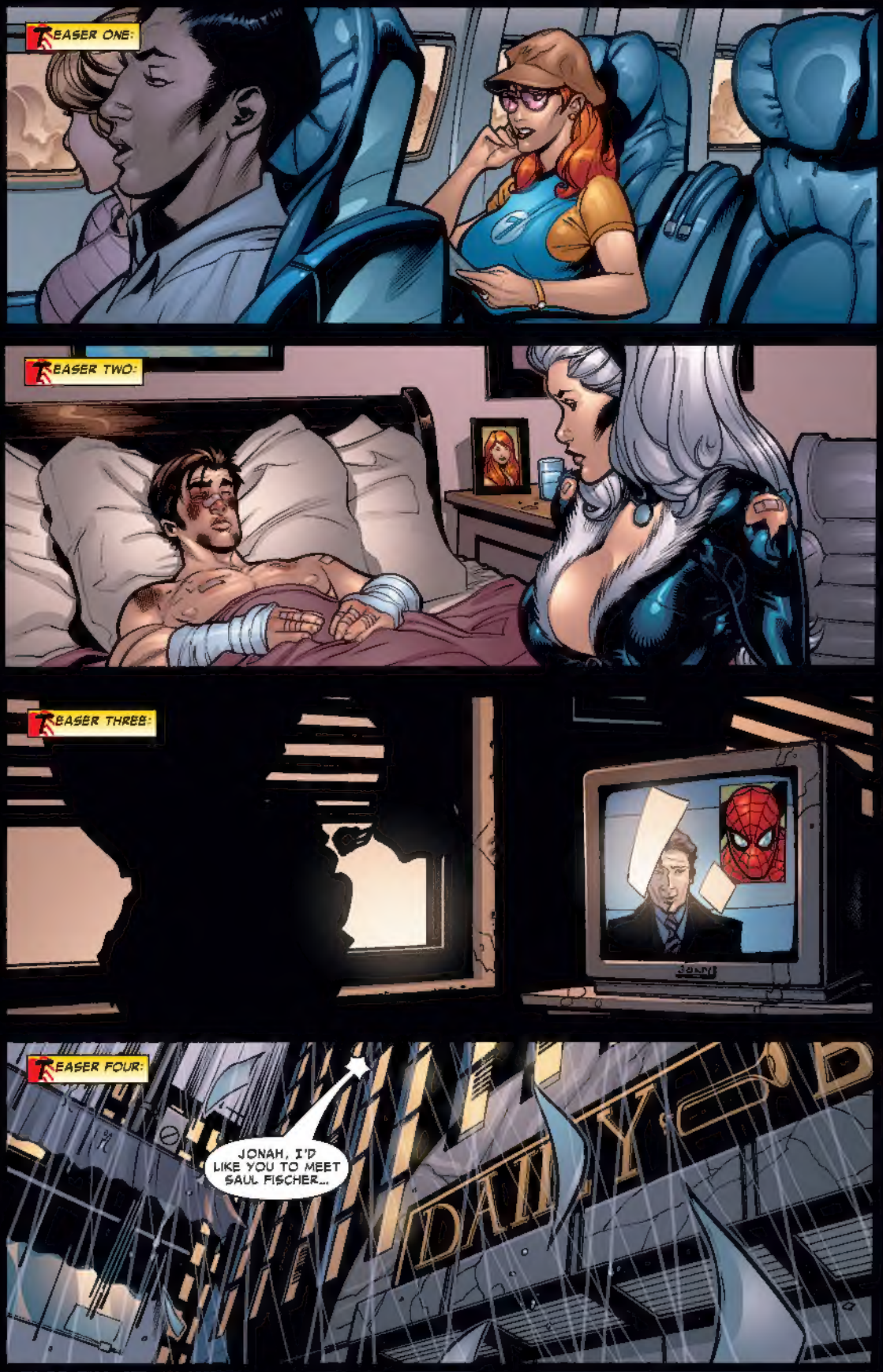
Got to stay straight. Blood's so damn SLIPPERY on this glass but only another ten or fifteen feet and I'm...
...HOME and DRY.
OH, JEEZUS...
WHAT ARE YOU DOING WORKING FOR A LUNATIC LIKE THE OWL, FELICIA? I THOUGHT YOU WENT STRAIGHT A WHILE BACK. AREN'T YOU SOME KIND OF PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR NOW?
YEAH, BUT THERE'S ONLY SO MANY CHEATING HUSBANDS AND INSURANCE FRAUDS OUT THERE, ADRIAN.
I DON'T MIND HUNTING DOWN THE OCCASIONAL PIECE OF TRASH IF IT MEANS A LITTLE EXTRA POCKET MONEY.
YOU ANY IDEA HOW MUCH TIME I WASTED LOOKING FOR YOU IDIOTS DOWN IN FLORIDA?
FELICIA, PLEASE... JUST LISTEN TO ME FOR A SECOND. THIS WHOLE THING AIN'T AS STRAIGHTFORWARD AS IT LOOKS, HONEY.
I WAS JUST TRYING TO HELP MY GRANDSON OUT, DON'T YOU GET IT? THE BOY'S JUST BEEN SO DAMN SICK AND THAT MONEY--
MY CUT OF THAT MONEY WE STOLE WOULD HAVE GONE TOWARDS HIS CANCER TREATMENT--

STONES THE SIZE OF WATERMELONS, TOOMES. I'LL GIVE YOU THAT MUCH OLD MAN.
WHAT?
I'M SERIOUS...
ME TOO.
TOUCH MY EX AGAIN AND I'LL KILL YOU.
FELICIA!

THE MEATPACKING DISTRICT, MANHATTAN
HIS EYES ARE REACTING TO THE LIGHT, MISTER OWL. I THINK HE'S WAKING UP
ABOUT TIME TOO, DOCTOR WINKLER. IT'LL BE DUSK AGAIN IN A COUPLE OF HOURS, AND I DON'T WANT TO WASTE SUCH A BEAUTIFUL NIGHT STUCK IN THIS DUSTY, OLD DUMP
PLEASE, DON'T EVEN TRY TO MOVE, ELECTRO. THE GOOD DOCTOR HERE HAS TAKEN THE PRECAUTION OF A HALOPERIDOL SHOT TO NEUTRALIZE THOSE NASTY LITTLE SHOCKS OF YOURS
WHHUH?
SADLY, THIS SAME COMPOUND NEUTRALIZES ALL YOUR MOTOR FUNCTIONS, TOO. WHICH IS WHY WE HAD TO TIE YOU TO THAT CHAIR, I'M AFRAID.
THE ROPES ARE THE ONLY THING KEEPING YOU UPRIGHT NOW, MISTER DILLON, THE ONLY MESSAGES YOUR BRAIN CAN UNDERSTAND ARE PAIN-SIGNALS.
OWL?
NOW YOU BE A BRAVE BOY, EH? DON'T TRY TO LIE AND PRETEND THAT YOU DIDN'T STEAL MY MONEY, BECAUSE YOU'RE ONLY GOING TO MAKE THINGS WORSE FOR YOURSELF.
JUST ADMIT WHAT YOU DID AND TAKE YOUR PUNISHMENT. YOU KNOW I'M HARDLY GOING TO KILL A USEFUL HENCHMAN AS I REBUILD MY CAREER FROM THAT DAREDEVIL FIASCO.

OWL, PLEASE! IT WASN'T ME! IT WAS THE VULTURE, I SWEAR! JUST GET ME OUTTA HERE AND I'LL EVEN HELP YOU FIND THE CROOKED, OLD GOAT!
LIKE YOU WERE GOING TO FIND MY TWENTY MILLION DOLLARS? I DON'T THINK SO, ELECTRO.
NO, NEVER SEND A MAN TO DO A WOMAN'S JOB, EH, BOYS?
WH-WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
THE BLACK CAT ALREADY FOUND TOOMES AND DROPPED HIM OFF WITH MY ASSOCIATES THIS AFTERNOON.
SHE'D BEEN SEARCHING FOR YOU BOTH DOWN IN FLORIDA FOR A WHILE SO I DON'T SUPPOSE SHE WAS IN THE BEST OF MOODS WHEN SHE CAUGHT UP WITH YOUR OLD PARTNER IN CRIME.
OWL, FOR GOD'S SAKE...
TAKE THE BLANKET OFF AND SHOW HIM WHAT HAPPENS TO SOMEONE WHO STEALS FROM THE OWL'S NEST, GENTLEMEN...

UUHHU...
HUUNNN...
OH, GOD! OH, ADRIAN! OH, JEEZUS GOD, NO!
TOOWIT-TWOO, MISTER DILLON.
TOOWIT-TWOO.


TEASER ONE:
TEASER TWO:
TEASER THREE:
TEASER FOUR:
JONAH, I'D LIKE YOU TO MEET SAUL FISCHER...
DAILY

...SAUL HERE'S AN ORDERLY DOWN AT NEW YORK METHODIST, AND HE'S GOTTEN US A LOT OF GREAT PICTURES THESE LAST COUPLE OF YEARS. TELL HIM SOME OF THE PICS YOU GOT FOR US, SAUL.
I'M THE GUY THAT TOOK THAT SHOT OF DAZZLER AFTER HER OVERDOSE, MISTER JAMESON. AND THE KINGPIN EATING THROUGH A STRAW AFTER DAREDEVIL MESSED HIM UP? THAT WAS ONE OF MINE, TOO.
YEAH? YOU'RE SO GREAT HOW COME I NEVER HEARD OF YOU, FATSO?
UH...
WELL, WE COULDN'T RUN SAUL'S NAME WITHOUT COMPROMISING HIS POSITION AT THE HOSPITAL, CHIEF, BUT, BELIEVE ME, THAT'S ALL ABOUT TO CHANGE WITH THIS LITTLE SNAP.
ROBERTSON, WHAT HAVE I TOLD YOU ABOUT TALKIN' STUFF UP IN FRONT OF THE FREELANCERS? EVERY ADJECTIVE YOU USE TO DESCRIBE THIS JUNK'S ANOTHER ZERO I GOTTA ADD AT THE END OF THE...
...
SNN
THESE PICS FOR REAL?
AS REAL AS YOU OR ME, J.J.J.! SPIDER-MAN WITHOUT HIS MASK AND LYING ON A HOSPITAL GURNEY. WHAT DO YOU THINK?

TO BE CONTINUED...